



# **Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks**

## **CITIZEN WORKGROUP – Meeting 7**

### **Developing Alternatives for Updating the Upper Missouri River Reservoir Fisheries Management Plan (UMRRFMP)**

July 20, 2009

8:00 AM – Late Afternoon (*lunch provided*)

MACo Conference Room

Public Comment Period – 12:15 – 12:45 PM

#### **PROCESS OBJECTIVES**

1. In 6-8 meetings, explore aspects of a fisheries Management Plan for Holter, Hauser, and Canyon Ferry Reservoirs.
2. Within the Workgroup's charter, develop consensus alternatives and recommend those alternatives to FWP.

#### **SESSION OBJECTIVES**

1. Affirm agreement on the goals and objectives for each body of water.
2. Review, discuss and come to agreement on draft alternative management strategies for each body of water.
3. Discuss the role of the Workgroup during the public comment process.

#### **AGENDA STRUCTURE**

- Refocusing... brief review of the Operating Procedures and Collaborative Framework
- What's happened since we last met?
- "Ratifying" the June meeting summary
- Reviewing, discussing, coming to agreement on recommended draft **alternative** management strategies per individual bodies of water
- Reviewing/commenting on general sections drafted by Eric (within time constraints)
- Where do we go from here?
  - FWP's tasks
  - Workgroup's tasks
  - Revising the "calendar"; public comment process
  - Setting a calendar date for the final Workgroup meeting

#### **OPERATING PROCEDURES**

##### **GROUND RULES/PROCESS AGREEMENTS**

###### **Meeting attendance**

- Attendance is basically "mandatory" for the best interest of the process and Group's outcomes. Acknowledging there are emergencies, Workgroup members will contact Beth or Ginny prior to missing a session.
- Members will not use substitutes or proxies if missing a meeting.

##### **COMMUNICATION**

- Members are requested to raise hands to be recognized by the facilitator.
- To support civility and courtesy, allow the other to finish without interrupting.

- Members are asked to manage their own communication – style, length of time, body language, no vulgar language, no name-calling, etc.
- The Facilitator will help manage the length of time of the person speaking.

### **PROCESS TO ENCOURAGE COMING TO AGREEMENT**

- Members are asked to describe the issue they are bringing to the table. Full Group discussion will follow, monitored by the Facilitator. The Group will decide how far to take the issue, the disposition of the issue, etc.
- Members will aim for 100% agreement and work hard to get there. At points in the discussion, the Facilitator may ask for a relative showing of support for the item at hand to determine the level of majority and minority. She will use an interest-based approach to help the group increase the majority. When the Facilitator feels that all attempts have been made to solve the minority's issues, she has permission to:
  - Ask the Group to table the issue for later discussion or;
  - Move the group to agreement – one way or another - if there is a super majority (80%/20%) of those present.

### **MEDIA**

- Eric (FWP) will be responsible for relaying information from the Workgroup to the media. Members approached by the media will direct the media to Eric.
- It is recognized that Members will report back to their constituents.
- Individual members are asked to couch their comments as personal opinion and not the view of the Group.

### **COLLABORATIVE FRAMEWORK**

#### **"Interests"**

- It's in the interest of angler/recreation businesses to have species diversity.
- It's in the interest coldwater anglers restored cold water species such as brown trout fishery below Hauser and where appropriate, Kokanee.
- It's in the interest of anglers to have Walleye number in balance with other species so there are more of all fish
- It's in the interest of anglers to have diversity in species to spread out the fishing pressure.
- It's in the interest of walleye anglers to enhance the walleye fishery meaning better quality fish, larger and easier to catch.
- It's in the interest of anglers to get perch and trout (or possibly another forage fish) numbers up so the forage base is healthy.
- It's in the interest of anglers to limit walleye on Holter.
- It's in the interest of this process to analyze and understand the role of carp in the system.
- It's in the interest of kids who fish to and quantity and quality fishing opportunities.
- It's in the interest of kids who fish to have biological practices in place that improve habitat and fish populations.
- It's in the interest of kids who fish to have prey fish enhanced through increased planning of trout.
- It's in the interest of kids who fish to have a multi-species fishery.
- It's in the interest of FWP to maintain the fisheries resources through easily understood regulations and closures where needed.
- It's in the interest of FWP to maintain the highest quality fishery and fishing opportunities for trout, perch, walleye, etc.

- It's in the interest of FWP to enhance and maintain the highest forage base possible in the Reservoir complex.
- It's in the interest of FWP to maintain safety, sustainable harvest, and commercial and recreational use on flat water and the tailrace.
- It's in the interest of FWP to develop viable, realistic alternatives to evaluate and use in the Management Plan.
- It's in the interest of FWP to restore and maintain summer and winter fisheries.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- We believe that the bodies of water in the Upper Missouri River Reservoir System should be managed as separate systems including the stretches of River that connect those bodies.
- We seek a multi-species approach to management of those bodies and the system as a whole.
- We believe that management goals and strategies for the system should result in healthy age class distribution and growth rates for those multi-species.
- At the same time, we believe that the system as a whole, cannot tolerate additional predatory species (i.e., Northern Pike) and that the Management Plan should include strategies accordingly.
- We believe that maintenance, enhancement and diversification of forage species are critical to the health of the system.
- We believe that some bird species are influencing the system and that the Management Plan should explore and address that issue.
- We believe that the changing dynamics of the system and its parts require a well-defined adaptive management strategy and process, and that adaptive management should be an integral part of the Management Plan.  
We believe that a useful adaptive management strategy should include triggers and benchmarks that help drive ongoing management decisions and regulations.
- We believe that the Management Plan should be science-based but recognize that social and economic factors play a large role in achieving social acceptance. We believe that biology and social interests share goals.

## **GOALS/DESIRED END RESULTS**

The Upper Missouri River Reservoir Management Plan should result in:

1. Management of all 3 Reservoirs and connecting River Sections as healthy multi-species fisheries.
2. Strategies that emphasize Trout and Walleye while recognizing Perch as an important game and forage species.
3. Improved forage species and availability for game fish in the Upper Missouri.
4. Realistic regulations and limits while providing a high level of angler satisfaction.
5. Social acceptance based on shared biologic and social/economic interests.
6. An adaptive management plan and process to react to the changing dynamics of the system and adjust accordingly.

Important Questions to be Addressed/Answered in the Management Plan:

- What species should be featured in each body of water and what should that look like?
- Within each featured species, how can we achieve optimum size and age distribution of fish?
- How can the forage base be improved to feed game fish in the system and its individual parts?
- What role can anglers play in positively affecting population dynamics?

- How can featured game fish species be managed to provide a high level of angler satisfaction in the upper Missouri?
- What are satisfactory angler catch rates? Is this the most important evaluation criteria in development of the Management Plan?
- How can regulations and limits be used and evaluated to effectively manage game fish populations to meet established goals?
- How can the Plan respond to the social concerns of Montana anglers to encourage support from the public?
- How can the Plan adapt to changes in the dynamics of each Reservoir and connecting waters over the next 10 years?